

Tips to Informal Caregivers
on Giving Personal Care

Getting a Person Out of Bed

Before getting out of bed, a person must be able to sit up without feeling dizzy. The person should also be strong enough to transfer from the bed to a chair.

Procedure for teaching the person to sit up:

- Explain the steps first.
- Have the person roll to one side facing the edge of the bed.
- Gradually drop legs over the side of the bed while pressing down on the bed with the elbow nearest its edge.
- Change weight to the hand and push down to bring shoulders to an upright position. At the same time, push down with the other hand for leverage.

Procedure for helping the person to sit up:

- Explain what will be done.
- Help the person flex his knees.
- Stand facing the head of the bed with the outer foot forward.
- Lock arms with the person by putting the near arm under the person's near arm with the hand on his shoulder.
- Rock backwards pulling the person to a sitting position.
- Check to see if the person is dizzy. If so, continue to support him.
- Some dizziness may be expected. If dizziness persists beyond a few minutes, return the person to a flat position in bed.
- Show the person how to support himself with his arms braced behind him. A footstool may be needed if the bed is too high for the person's feet to reach the floor while sitting on the side.

A footstool can be made by taping large juice cans together. Pad with cotton or soft material, such as nylon

hose. Tape cardboard to the sides and top of the cans. Cover the stool using a towel or plastic adhesive cloth. Attach non-skid strips to the bottom to keep the stool from slipping.

An improvised bathrobe can be made from a blanket by making a fold of approximately 6-8 inches along the length of the blanket to serve as a collar. Pull the ends of the blanket toward the person's shoulders and fasten the ends together in front with a safety pin. Center an end of the blanket over each wrist, turning back several inches to make cuffs.

Procedure for transferring a person from the bed to a chair:

- Explain what will be done.
- Assist the person to put on shoes or slippers.
- Use a sturdy chair with arms and a seat low enough to allow the person's feet to solidly touch the floor. If using a wheelchair, make sure it is sturdy and in good condition.
- Place the chair parallel to the bed on the person's strongest side. If using a wheelchair, lock brakes and push footrests out of the way.
- Stand in front of the person to assist him if he should fall.
- Instruct him to lean forward slightly, push down on the bed with his hands, straighten his legs and then stand up.
- Have him grab the armrests and lower himself into the chair, leaning slightly forward as he sits down.
- Have him slide his hips back into the chair and sit squarely.
- Reverse the process for getting out of the chair.

The above statements are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease. You should always consult with your physician about any health and lifestyle concerns or issues you may have.